

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph on page 1, beginning at line 4 with the following:

The present invention relates to an air suspension, and more particularly to an anti-vacuum system with a separating air spring for a vehicle which requires an ~~the~~ axle to be lowered away from the chassis.

Please replace the paragraph on page 1, beginning at line 7 with the following:

A common air suspension system typically comprises a bracket secured to a chassis of a vehicle. A longitudinal member extending generally lengthwise of the vehicle is mounted to the bracket for pivoting about an axis generally transverse of the vehicle and to carry an axle having one or more road wheels. An air spring mounted spaced from the axis acts as an adjustable compression spring between the vehicle and the longitudinal member to bias the wheels for effective road engagement and to buffer axle and wheel vibration. The air spring typically includes a piston and an air ~~rubber~~ cell. The piston is mounted to the longitudinal member and the air cell is attached to a bead plate mounted to the chassis.

Please replace the paragraph on page 2, beginning at line 17 with the following:

The longitudinal member extends generally lengthways of a vehicle and is pivotally connected within a bracket to a pivot generally transverse of the vehicle which permits movement of the longitudinal member and defines an axis. From the pivot, the longitudinal member extends to mount the air spring. The axle assembly of the vehicle is secured to the longitudinal member between the pivot and the air spring. A ~~The~~ telescopic suspension damper interconnects the axle assembly and the bracket.

Please replace the paragraph on page 2, beginning at line 23 with the following:

The air spring includes an ~~a~~ air cell and a piston which act as a compression spring between the longitudinal member and a ~~the~~ chassis. The ~~air spring~~ piston is actuated by a gas

feed connected to ~~a the~~ vehicle air supply. ~~A The~~ bottom of the piston is attached to the longitudinal member and the air cell is attached to ~~a the~~ piston top. The gas feed is extended along the longitudinal member and enters the bottom of the piston. The gas feed is located in a protected location and extends through the piston. A coupling attaches the air cell to the piston.

Please replace the paragraph on page 5, beginning at line 18 with the following:

As shown in Figure 3, the suspension system 10 can also include a protective skirt 40 attached to the locating plate 36. The protective skirt 40 is preferably of a semi-rigid material and extends from or is integral to the locating plate 36 to further protect the air spring 16 air cell 32. The protective skirt 40 also guides the air cell ~~32 46~~ into contact with the locating plate 36 when the longitudinal member 14 pivots toward the chassis 22. In other words, when the suspension system 10 moves from an unloaded condition to a loaded condition the protective skirt 40 further directs the air cell ~~32 46~~ into correct position with the locating plate 36 and correctly compresses the air cell 32. Further, by extending the protective skirt 40 at the rear of the suspension system 10, the protective skirt 40 particularly protects the air spring 16 when used on a vehicle such as a dump truck which reverses into contact with material and debris.

Please replace the paragraph on page 6, beginning at line 1 with the following:

As further shown in Figure 4, the air spring 16 includes the air cell 32 which is powered by the piston 34. The piston 34 is actuated by a gas feed 42 connected to the vehicle air supply (not shown.) A bottom 44 of the piston 34 is attached to the longitudinal member 14 and the air cell 32 is attached to a top 46 of the piston 34. Preferably, the gas feed 42 extends along the longitudinal member 14 and enters the bottom 44 of the piston 34. The gas feed 42 is located in a protected location along the longitudinal member 14 which provides an efficient route to the piston 16 even when the air spring 16 separates from the chassis 22. In addition, by extending the gas feed 42 through the piston 16, a coupling ~~48 46~~ can be provided which attaches the air cell 32 to the piston 34. The coupling ~~48 46~~ thereby providesing the dual function of securing both the gas feed 42 and attachment of the air cell 32.